



## Ferguson-Florissant (MO) Branch

Shirley and Pat  
Co- Presidents

Wilzetta  
Program Vice President

Gwen  
Membership Vice-President

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February 2015

Pat, Editor

### **FEBRUARY BOARD MEETING**

The board will meet at the Corner Coffee House on February 2 at 11:30.

### **SHORT SUMMARY OF JANUARY BOARD MEETING**

The board met on January 12 at the Corner Coffee House. After the board approved the minutes from the October board meeting, Lillian gave her report on the checking and savings accounts. The board approved moving those accounts to a different bank.

Carolyn discussed Fundraising. The check from the Tupperware party Myra hosted has not arrived. Plans for Game Day January 19 are being finalized; sign-ups for various tasks were passed around. Carolyn also spoke about the International Relations Lecture for February (see below).

Other old business:

- The rolling closures of county libraries for renovations will prevent us from placing AAUW materials in the display cases during the months we have signed up for.
- Robotics will resume January 27; the Hazelwood STEM Extravaganza, which will include the Robotics teams and a table with our branch materials, will be January 24.
- The nominating committee will have candidates for this year's elections ready by the February branch meeting.
- The board authorized an additional \$50 donation to NCCWSL to fund college women for their national convention.
- Kathy has arranged the March Branch meeting on Women's Issues and History with presenter Pam.
- The board chose April 9 for the spring Meet and Greet and May 16 for the May Luncheon.
- Shirley gave a report on the Legislative Retreat (see below).
- Judy has accepted the new post of Diversity Chair.
- Elaine reported on the Human Trafficking Awareness event (see below). She also reported on donations to AAUW Funds and the Eleanor Richardson Fund.

### **GAME DAY JANUARY 19**

Game Day was a rousing success thanks to the many people who worked on it, and especially to Carolyn who coordinated the whole event. Additional thanks go to Wilzetta, Lillian, Linda, Lovene, Judy, Virginia, Sylvia, Jann, Elaine, Myra and Joyce. Thank you!!!

Lillian reports that the generosity of members and guests raised over \$200 dollars from the Silent Auction, donations for lunch, and sale of raffle tickets. The items for each of these were donated by members. In addition, Virginia offered books for sale, with money from that to go to Legal Advocacy Fund. "Admission" was paper goods for The Girls or toiletries for the homeless, and tables for donating those things were full.

Several tables of members and guests played games such as cards, yahtzee, dominoes, scrabble, and others. In all, quite a success.



Sylvia and Shirley prepare for Game Day



Members and guests enjoy Game Day

## **FEBRUARY BRANCH MEETING**

### **Noted African American women from Missouri**

Author and educator Dr. John Wright will present the program for Black History Month at the February Ferguson-Florissant AAUW meeting. Dr. Wright has written extensively on the black experience in Missouri; his latest book deals with famous African Americans from the state of Missouri. His presentation is entitled “Noted Africa American Women from Missouri.” Included in this presentation will be profiles of Maya Angelou, Josephine Baker, and Grace Bumbry, among others. Copies of his latest book will be available at the event.

The branch meeting will be February 16, **at 10:00 am**, in the Educational Building of Immanuel UCC Church, 211 Church Street, Ferguson. The program is free and open to the public.

## **PRESIDENTS’ LETTER**

Understanding the local events of the last few months is a challenge for all of us. We must try to learn as much as we can about what happened in Ferguson and why. Part of this is understanding concepts that may not have been contemplated before. One of these is often called white privilege. This term refers to the advantages that white people have and people of color don’t. If a person is white, she may be unaware of those advantages because they have always been an unremarked part of life. Perhaps a parallel might help us better understand.

Besides white privilege, there is something called male privilege. That is, men have many advantages over women in a multitude of aspects of life. These advantages include issues of pay equity, voice in the public square, not needing to campaign for the ERA, the “glass ceiling,” and much more. Because most men have worked hard for what they have, many men don’t see or understand that they have always had privileges in society that women do not. What they cannot see, because it underlies everything without being specifically stated or realized, is very clear to many women.

It helps a white woman to understand white privilege if she ponders what she knows or has experienced because of male privilege. That parallel can help us to understand the negative effects of white privilege on non-white Americans.

## **PUBLIC POLICY--by Shirley Missouri Legislative Retreat 2015**

Women representing the major women’s organizations in the state met in Columbia on January 10 to establish legislative priorities for the 2015 Missouri legislative session. This annual event brings together women’s groups representing thousands of women; included in this working session were members from AAUW, NOW, League of Women Voters, Missouri Women’s Leadership Coalition, Missouri Women’s Political Caucus, Business Women of Missouri, and others. There were some university students in attendance also.

The day began with an analysis of the November 2014 elections as they impacted women. There are now 49 women in the Missouri legislature. In the House, there are 24 Republican women and 19

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Democratic women, the first time the Republican women outnumbered the Democratic ones (26.3 percent). The national average of women in the State Houses is 25.5 percent. There are six women in the Senate, five Democrats and one Republican (17.6 percent). The national average of women in State Senates is 20.8 percent. There are no women statewide office holders. The national average for women in statewide offices is 22.6 percent.

Rev. Rebecca was the keynote speaker at the morning session. She addressed the issues surrounding the unrest in Ferguson, what is being done to remedy the inequities, and the history behind how the situation became so volatile.

In establishing priorities for 2015, the highest priority was identified as the Equal Rights Amendment/Pay Equity and Reproductive Rights. In the second tier of priorities were Social Justice (Racism), Ethics, and Poverty; the third tier consisted of Labor/Minimum Wage/Right to Work/Discrimination, Violence Against Women, and Education. Gun Regulation and Voting Rights were also addressed.

These topics were chosen after a review of the pre-filed bills for the 2015 session and the public statements of legislators as to what they would be sponsoring and working on this session.

These priorities will be used in lobbying efforts in the state legislature. As proposed legislation is debated and voted upon, the women's lobbyists will use the priorities as a guide as to where most women in the state want efforts placed. Efforts are also directed at topics where there is no other group working on them.

### **NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT by Judy**

The only two offices that are to be filled this year are Membership Vice-President and Treasurer. Gwen has agreed to continue as Membership Vice-President and Lillian will continue as Treasurer for one year with the condition that Pamela will "shadow" her for this year and take over as Treasurer the following year. Pamela has agreed to do this. Other officers will continue to fulfill their current terms of service. The slate of nominees will be formally presented at the February branch meeting. Voting will take place during the March branch meeting and installation of officers will occur during the May luncheon. Thank you to Gwen, Lillian and Pamela for agreeing to take on these responsibilities.

The nominating committee consisted of Sylvia, Gwen, and Judy.

### **HUMAN TRAFFICKING AWARENESS EVENT**

Elaine attended the Human Trafficking Awareness Event sponsored by the St. Charles Outreach Coalition Against Human Trafficking on January 10. She reports the following were panel members and includes their contact information:

1. Amanda, Coalition Organizer. CATE (Coalition Against Trafficking and Exploitation)
2. Amanda, Anti-Trafficking Community Coordinator, International Institute
3. Sgt. Adam, St. Louis County Police, Supervisor Special Investigations Unit
4. A representative from Healing Action

### **NEW MEMBER PROFILE**

This is a continuing series introducing our newest members of our branch. They are most welcome and have quickly become **active** members.

**Jann** graduated from Stephens College and McKendree with a teaching degree and taught elementary students. She raised one son, David, who now lives in Flagstaff, Arizona. As a single mom, Jann worked for Special School District for 25 years as a teacher assistant. She retired in 2012, but she still substitute teaches two days a week for Special School District at Combs and Parker Road Elementary Schools in the Ferguson-Florissant School District. Jann also volunteers her time to help students at Parker Road Elementary School one day a week.

Jann loves to travel. She lived in Europe for almost ten years. Her dad and her former husband were both in the Army. Right now it's difficult to get away since she is a primary caregiver for her mother. She did have a wonderful trip this summer to Arizona, where she visited her son.

Jann lives in Florissant with her husband, Glenn. He has three grown children and they enjoy their three beautiful granddaughters from his oldest son and his wife, who live in Wentzville.

### **TUESDAY AFTERNOON BOOK GROUP**

Tuesday Afternoon Book Group will meet on February 10 at Cannolis at 11:30. Pat will review

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Between Shades of Gray by Ruta Sepetys. (Not to be confused with the much-hyped Fifty Shades of Grey !!) Notify Pat if you plan to attend.

### **SPRING FLING**

The annual Spring Fling sponsored by IBC will take place on Saturday, March 21. The program will feature Dianne as pioneering environmentalist Rachel Carson. The flyer for this event, including the registration form, is included with this newsletter.

### **INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS LECTURE SERIES**

The 2015 International Relations Lecture Series, presented by The Tuesday Women's Association of Ethical Society and AAUW meets promptly at 10:45 in the lower meeting room of the Ethical Society of St. Louis, 9001 Clayton Road, St. Louis, MO 63117. Free parking is available in the rear of the building. The 45-50 minute lecture will be followed by a question and answer period. Attendees are invited to bring lunch and to stay and discuss the day's topic.

On February 10, 2015, the topic will be **The Status of Women in the World**. The speaker will be Dr. Farida Jalalzai, Associate Professor and Chair of Political Science at the University of Missouri-St. Louis. This talk will focus on trends in women's office holding worldwide. Dr. Jalalzai will analyze the factors related to women's ascension to legislative and executive office holding and potential effects of women's inclusion on policy outcomes and institutional practices. She will conclude that women's presence in political offices offers tremendous democratic benefits for societies.

Coordinators for this event are Carolyn, AAUW, and Kay, TWA and AAUW.

### **ADELANTE BOOK GROUP**

The Adelante Book Group will meet on February 26 at 1:30 at Barnes & Noble on Clarkson in Chesterfield. Sharon will lead a discussion of *The Round House: A Novel* by Louise Erdrich.

### **DOWNTOWN LUNCH GROUP**

The Downtown Lunch group will meet on February 17 at 11:45 at Ranoush (Syrian), 6501 Delmar Blvd., University City (314-726-6874). To make your reservation, RSVP to Kay.

### **ST. LOUIS BRANCH PROGRAM**

The St. Louis Branch of AAUW will present a special tribute to 250 notable women who have contributed to the City of St. Louis over the past 250 years. The women are trailblazers, freedom fighters, suffragists and other empowered women. The program will be presented on Saturday, February 21, from 2:30 to 3:30 at the Buder Branch Library, 4401 Hampton Avenue, St. Louis, MO 63109. Admission is free, but registration is requested. RSVP by February 19 at the following website:

<https://aauwstlouisbranch.wildapricot.org/event-1842562> or contact Ellen.

### **BALLWIN-CHESTERFIELD SPEAKER**

Ballwin-Chesterfield Branch of AAUW will present "Mental Health--The Importance of Strengthening Medicaid on Missouri's Mental Health System". The speaker will be Jacqueline Lukitsch, Director of Advocacy, National Alliance on Mental Illness. The program will occur on Thursday, February 12 at Trinity Lutheran Church, 14088 Clayton Road (at Clayton and 141) Chesterfield, MO 63017. Coffee and socializing, 8:45 am; Business Meeting, 9:30 am; Program, 10:15-11:45 am.

### **EQUAL PAY AND EQUITY DAY RALLY**

Mark your calendar for the Equal Pay and Equity Day rally to be held Tuesday, April 14, 10:00 am in Jefferson City--Rally Under the Dome.

### **CALENDAR**

**February 2--Branch board meeting**

**February 10--Tuesday Afternoon Book Group**

February 10--International Relations Lecture

February 12--Ballwin-Chesterfield program on Mental Health

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**February 16--Branch Meeting, 10:00 am**

February 17--Downtown Lunch group

February 21--St. Louis Branch tribute to 250 notable women

February 24--IBC meeting

February 26--Adelante Book Group

March 21--Spring Fling

April 14--Equal Pay and Equity Day rally

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